

WASHINGTON, DC – On Tuesday, June 21, 2011 from 3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in 2226 Rayburn House Office Building, Representative Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (VA-3), along with Representatives John Conyers, Jr. (MI-14), Jerrold Nadler (NY-8), Barney Frank (MA-4), and Melvin L. Watt (NC-12) will host a press conference in honor of the 70th anniversary of President Roosevelt issuing Executive Order 8802 and calling for President Obama to restore religious liberty protections in employment law.

On June 25, 1941, with the U.S. poised to go to war, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 8802 in response to the efforts of A. Philip Randolph and other civil rights leaders to acquire fair employment practices for Black workers at defense plants. This marked the first time ever that presidential action was taken to prohibit employment discrimination by private employers operating federal contracts and served as the birth of fair employment practices in the United States. Virtually every president expanded upon equal opportunity employment practices, and discrimination was illegal for over 60 years. Then, on December 2, 2002, President George W. Bush signed Executive Order 13279, which effectively rolled back civil rights to exempt religious organizations acting as government contractors and providing government programs with taxpayer money from the prohibition on religious discrimination. On the eve of the 70th anniversary of Executive Order 8802, it is time to correct this injustice.

A press conference will be held on Tuesday, June 21st at 3:00 p.m. and will feature Members of Congress, leading civil rights advocates and religious leaders:

WHO:

Members of Congress

Hilary Shelton, Director, NAACP Washington Bureau  
Rabbi David Saperstein, Director, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism  
Rev. Dr. Paul L. Brown, Sr., African American Ministers In Action  
Barbara Arnwine, Executive Director, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

**WHAT:**

Press Conference

Any media with cameras are asked to pre-set at 2:30 p.m.

**WHEN:**

Tuesday, June 21, 2011, 3:00 p.m.

**WHERE:**

2226 Rayburn House Office Building

A briefing entitled "Celebrating 70 Years of a Civil Rights Milestone & A Call to Restore Religious Liberty Protections" will follow the press conference from 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. in the same room. The briefing is open to Members of Congress, staff and the public.

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